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TEMPERA AND ENCAUSTIC IN ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES.

From "Painting Popularly Explained," by T. J. GULLICK and J. THIES.

SOME extremely interesting remains of Christian wall paintings of the time of the empire discovered in the Catacombs of Rome,* require, however, to be noticed. The grandest and most impressive of these were found in the Catacomb of St. Calixtus, on the Via Appia, under the church of St. Sebastian, called after St. Calixtus, who was Pope from 219 to 223, A.D. One chamber contained an "Adoration of the Kings;" but the Virgin and Child, and a town (Bethlehem) in the background, are all that remain. Lower down is a man pointing upward, supposed by the late eminent German critic, Dr. Kugler, to be the prophet Micah, and to have reference to the words—"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel," etc. Other subjects are, "Moses striking the Rock;" "Daniel in the Lions' Den;" the "Ascension of Elijah;" "Noah looking out of the Ark;" the "Raising of Lazarus;" Orpheus (an emblem of Christ); besides single figures of Job, Moses, and several symbols. On the ceiling is a bust portrait of Christ, the neck and bosom uncovered, with the exception of some drapery hanging over the left shoulder, which is supposed to be the earliest portrait of Christ, and to have become subsequently the type for others.† The

* "The Catacombs of Rome, most of them lying at a short distance from the city gates, were originally, and probably from the time of the Republic, *pizzolana* pits. They were also early made use of as places of sepulture for the lowest classes of the people, and for slaves. For these and other reasons, being avoided and decied, they were chosen by the persecuted Christians as places of resort and concealment, and more especially, also, as places of burial for their martyred brethren; Christ having condemned the heathenish custom of burning the dead, which, independent of this, had already much declined since the establishment of the Empire, several excavations of this kind, which had been abandoned for generations, and probably forgotten, were secretly enlarged by the Christians into extensive and intricate labyrinths, composed of narrow intersecting passages, along the sides of which sepulchral recesses were disposed. Many of these passages terminate in small, architecturally-shaped, vaulted spaces, where, in periods of persecution, divine service, and especially the festivals of the martyrs, were held. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when a new impulse was given to the Catholic [Romish] church, these resting-places of the martyrs were again opened and eagerly examined, when the sides and roofs were found to be covered with a great variety of paintings. Since then, these have, unfortunately, been almost obliterated by the admission of the air and by the smoke of torches, while such engravings as were taken from them at the time give us no adequate conception of their style."—KUGLER'S *Handbook of Painting* vol. i. p. 13.

† The resemblance is, of course, purely imaginary; for not the least reliance can be placed on the numerous legends respecting the actual bodily appearance of our Saviour, although the painter of this portrait probably followed a traditional type, for it differs materially from the Grecian ideal. A letter, describing the person of Christ, was pretended to have been written to the Roman Senate by Lentulus; but it appears for the first time only in the writings of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the eleventh century. The letter referred to runs thus: "A man of stately figure, dignified in appearance, with a countenance, inspiring veneration, and which those who look upon it may love as well as fear. His hair, rather dark and glossy, falls down in curls below his shoulders, and is parted in the middle after the manner of the Nazarenes; the forehead is smooth and remarkably serene; the

face is oval, the nose straight, eyebrows arched, the forehead rather high and smooth; the expression serious and mild; the hair parted on the forehead, and flowing in curls on the shoulders; the beard not thick, but short, and divided.

In other of the Catacombs may also occasionally be traced the habits of the early Christians. They are seen assembled for their "love-feasts," celebrating baptisms and marriages, and congregating together for the purposes of instruction. We have noticed some paintings of earlier times; but as the Catacombs for many centuries after Constantine the Great remained open to the public as places of veneration, and as such continued to be decorated in the taste of the day, it follows that the paintings extend to much later periods. "The Virgin Mary," says Kugler, "occurs so seldom in the earlier paintings of the Catacombs, and then only subordinately, that in those times no particular type had been established for her;" this was reserved for the "Mariolatry" of a later period.

It has been noticed that the grosser forms of Christian idolatry may be dated from the fifth century. The great mass of the people were unable to read, and sunk in ignorance. With the inseparable concomitant of ignorance—superstition—it was not surprising that they did not correctly apprehend the nature of the images, even if their bishops had a more intelligent intention in setting them up. Instead, therefore, of regarding them as exemplary records of fortitude and piety, or spiritual symbols incentive of devotion, they worshipped them as holy images, material saints, and mediators. Notwithstanding that this

face without line or spot, and agreeably ruddy; the nose and mouth are faultless; the beard thick and reddish, of the color of the hair, not long, but divided; the eyes bright, and of a varied color." Two traditions respecting the "holy true image" are deserving notice for their connection with works of Christian art. The first is related by Evagrius, a writer of the sixth century, and is as follows: "Abgarus, King of Edessa, in Mesopotamia, who was confined by sickness, which his physicians could not relieve, having heard of the miracles performed by Christ in Judea, sent a messenger to him to invite him to come to Edessa to cure him of his complaint. This messenger was a painter named Ananias, and the king ordered him that, if he could not persuade Christ to come to him, he was at least to bring his portrait. Ananias delivered his letter, but, on account of the crowd, retired to an eminence close by, and there attempted to make a drawing of his face. This he found impossible to do owing to Christ's repeated movements, or, as a later authority says, the reluctance of his countenance. Christ himself, however, accomplished his purpose; for, having called for water to wash his face with, he wiped it with a napkin, which he gave, with an answer for the king, to Ananias, who found a likeness miraculously imprinted on it." Abgarus, as he anticipated, was cured by this portrait, and it became an object of universal veneration at Edessa, until it was removed to Constantinople by Nicophorus Phocas, in A.D. 964. It was subsequently carried to Rome, and is claimed to be identical with the painted head of the Saviour preserved in the church of San Silvestro in Capite; although another account states that it was taken to Genoa and deposited in the church of San Bartolomeo; and although this and various other images of Christ, still held sacred in the Romish church, have been repeatedly declared spurious in councils of the church. The other tradition is, that a woman presented a handkerchief to Christ to wipe the perspiration from his face as he passed to Calvary, and that upon this handkerchief the Redeemer left his likeness. This woman was canonized by Leo X., under the name of St. Veronica, and the handkerchief is said to be preserved among the relics of St. Peter's! A representation of this kind—the head of the Saviour on a cloth, and called a "sudarium"—is common in the works of early painters.

idolatry had been foreseen and warned against by the earlier prelates, resisted by contemporary dignitaries of the church, and forbidden by the edicts of several councils against the adoration of images, their use gradually prevailed; and, surviving all the efforts of the Iconoclasts in the eighth and ninth centuries, finally triumphed throughout the whole of Christendom, both in the Western and Eastern churches.

The Iconoclasts (or image-breakers) of the Eastern church commenced their systematic destruction of works of Art in 726, and it was continued with slight interruptions for upward of a century. The productions of ancient Art were not directly involved in the general demolition—although they must have suffered: the zeal of the Iconoclasts was directed against Christian images, viz., the images of Christ, the Virgin, and the saints, as idols. The popes of the West, however, at this time encouraged their use; and the consequence was, that a contest arose which convulsed the whole empire. Eventually, the party in favor of the use of images triumphed through the influence of the Empress Irene, the widow of the Emperor Leo IV., though the contention still continued, and the Emperor Theophilus (829-842) protected the Iconoclasts. In the ninth and tenth centuries the images were finally tolerated in the Greek Church.

Yet, although the Greek artists were frequently persecuted and dispersed, Constantinople apparently remained throughout the whole of the middle ages the capital of the Arts. It suffered, however, still further devastations by the Crusaders, and more especially in the great fires of 1203 and following year, when it was taken by the Venetians. But to this Latin conquest, which opened an intercourse with the Venetians, has been generally attributed the first impulse toward the revival of the Arts in the West. The Greek artists poured into Italy, at Venice, and Palermo, and also at Pisa, which was then a flourishing seaport. And to the schools thus established at Venice, Pisa, and Siena, although the Byzantine characteristics were for some time broadly preserved, has been referred the growth of modern Italian Art; for it has been assumed that the seed sown in a fresh soil rapidly fructified in greatly increased luxuriance and beauty.

But Dr. Kugler is of opinion that the first germs of a purely western mode of conception are discernible not only contemporary with the influence supposed to be traceable to the works of these last emigrants from the East, but at a considerably earlier period. "After the close of the eleventh century, that epoch of national prosperity dawned upon the distracted country which, sooner or later, never fails to infuse into Art a fresh and higher life. The Roman church arose from a long-continued state of degradation, for which she was herself partly accountable, to be mistress of the West. She reinstated Rome as the centre of the world, and restored to the Italians a sense of national existence. . . . The Byzantine style was, at that time, so utterly sapless and withered, even in its native land, that it could as little resist as rival the innovating principle, though individual painters occasionally made the attempt."* The amalgamation, then, of the Byzantine style with the old native Longobardian, produced a new school, which is known as the "*Romanesque*," or Romano-Greek. This style may be noticed to the best advantage after some account of missal-painting, for the old manuscripts furnish us with some of the best data for estimating the Art of this period.

However, to the Greeks the Italians were at least indebted for the methods of preparing pigments, and other technicalities. Byzantine art, we have seen, became a regular traditional system; technical methods descended as property from master to apprentice, and the manufacture of pictures was as regularly organized as that of any other article of constant and regular demand. In fact, in the eastern empire, and even in Italy long after the revival of painting, the artist was generally confounded with the workman, and only the "master of works," or architect—who, however, was sometimes a painter—was held in esteem, or liberally rewarded. But where the higher qualities of Art are neglected, and any innovation regarded as a species of heresy, we may yet easily imagine it possible for the mechanical departments to be very successfully cultivated. And that this was the case mediæval manuscripts afford abundant and conclusive evidence. Of these we may mention two treatises in particular, "*De coloribus et Artibus Romanorum*," by Eraclius, and "*Diversarum Artium Schedula*," by the monk Theophilus. These are well known to antiquaries; but there is considerable diversity of opinion respecting their date among their several editors, Raspe, Mrs. Merrifield, De l'Escalopier, and Hendrie. They are, however, certainly not later than the end of the twelfth, or beginning of the thirteenth century. The most complete copy of Eraclius is that transcribed, with others, by Jehan le Begne, in 1431, and edited, together with many other valuable MSS., by Mrs. Merrifield.* Nothing is known of the personality of Eraclius and Theophilus; but it is highly probable they were of some country north of the Alps, and therefore represent the northern followers of the Byzantine school. All that is positively known of Theophilus is that he was a monk, and that Theophilus was not his right name. Lessing, one of his editors, seeks to identify him with Tuttilio (801-921), a famous painter, sculptor, and gold-worker of the celebrated monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland. In the treatise of Theophilus, amid many empirical formulae and traditions, embodying, perhaps, some of the symbols of alchemy, there is much that is interesting and important; and by it we obtain a curious insight into the various arts practised in the cloisters. After a kind of apostolic form of greeting common in such works, we have the following passage in an introduction, which concludes with a pious benediction and prayer:

"Should you carefully peruse this, you will there find out whatever Greece possesses in kinds and mixtures of various colors; whatever Tuscany knows of in mosaic work, or in variety of enamel; whatever Arabia shows forth in work of fusion, ductility, or chasing; whatever Italy ornaments with gold, in diversity of vases and sculpture of gems or ivory; whatever France loves in a costly variety of windows; whatever industrious Germany approves in work of gold, silver, copper and iron, of woods, and of stones."

The reader will remark the reference to Greece as the source of the "kinds and mixtures of various colors;" and a further confirmation of the opinion that the Italian artists owed at least their knowledge of technicalities to the Greeks is afforded by the resemblance the contents of this treatise bear to the curious Byzantine MS. discovered by M. Didron in a convent of Mount Athos.

The knowledge of Art being confined to the religious fraternities, we need not be surprised that the pilgrim monks carried in their various missions the practice of Art into the remotest

* "Handbook of Painting," vol. i. p. 92.

* "Original Treatises on the Arts of Painting," 2 vols.

corners of Europe where they penetrated. Thus may England and Ireland, even as far back as the time of St. Augustine and St. Patrick, have gained a knowledge of Art, in addition to the Roman or native traditions that might have been preserved. Certainly the Irish and Anglo-Saxon manuscripts of the seventh and eighth centuries display, though rude in taste, extraordinary elaboration. However this may be, after the year 1000, Art made so sudden and simultaneous an advance throughout Europe, that the various countries were placed almost on a level in this respect.

The Roman and Byzantine influence is thus traced to England by Mr. Hendrie: "We find that, previously to the edict by which Charlemagne resolved to encourage the various arts to the utmost of his power, Wilfred, Bishop of York, and Biscop, his friend, had already availed themselves of the assistance of foreign artists, in order to decorate the cathedral of St. Peter [York Minster], before the year 675. Biscop undertook a journey to the Roman States, and brought home many pictures with which the churches of St. Peter and Weremouth were ornamented. The second visit of Alfred to Rome with Ethelwulf, although undertaken at an early age, would, doubtless, not be without its influence on such a mind. The Painted Chamber at Westminster, in which Edward the Confessor died, the renown of St. Dunstan as an accomplished painter and a skillful contriver of instruments, the remains of the Saxon chased and enamelled work, which was esteemed on the Continent as early as the seventh century, and the manuscripts which are yet extant, prove that, in this country at least, the arts, as introduced by the Romans, were never wholly lost. Records exist of Alfred the Great having summoned workmen from all parts of Europe to assist in the construction of the edifices he proposed to erect, and it is probable many Byzantine traditions may thus have been acquired for England."

We may now without further digression glance at the great revival of painting in Italy in the thirteenth century, which immediately followed two of the most important events in the history of the world—the discovery of gunpowder and the invention of printing—events which ultimately entirely changed the constitution of society. This revival consisted first, *objectively*, in a closer imitation of nature, although for nearly two centuries, till the time of Massaccio, there was little individuality in the imitation, and many (modified) Byzantine conventionalisms were for a considerable time preserved; and, secondly, *subjectively*, of a more earnest religious vitality and sentiment in the "*motives*." *

* "The use of this word in a new and technical sense, as applied to works of Art, becoming general in our own, as it is already in other languages, a definition may be offered. The word may often be rendered *intention*, but it has a fuller meaning. In its ordinary application it means the principle of action, attitude, and composition in a single figure or group; thus it has been observed, that in some antique gems which are defective in execution, the *motives* are frequently fine. Such qualities in this case may have been the result of the artist's feeling; but in servile copies, like those of the Byzantine artists, the *motives* could only belong to the original inventor. In its more extended signification the term comprehends inventions generally as distinguished from execution. Another very different and less general sense in which this expression is also used, must not be confounded with the foregoing; thus a *motive* is sometimes understood in the sense of a *suggestion*. It is said, for example, that Poussin found the *motives* of his landscape compositions at Tirol. In this case we have a *suggestion* improved and carried out; in the copies of the By-

At the head of this revival, which commenced in the Florentine or Tuscan school, the name of Cimabue has been usually placed; but artists preceded him who gave some indication of independent feeling. Of these, Guido da Siena and Guiseto da Pisa may be named: Margaritone d'Arezzo also preceded Cimabue; but his works are more purely Greek, and he murmured bitterly at the innovations of the latter. (See his picture in the National Gallery.)

Nevertheless, Giovanni, of the noble family of Cimabue, was the first painter of renown (b. 1240, d. after 1300). One of his earliest and best-known works is the colossal Madonna, still in the church of Santa Maria Novella, to which it was carried in triumphal procession from the house of the painter—an event, which gave the name of Borgo Allegri, or the "gay quarter," to that part of the city.* But the great talents of Cimabue are exhibited most conspicuously in the large distemper wall-paintings ascribed to him in the upper church of St. Francesco at Assisi, some of which still exist. Giotto completed the extensive decorations both of the upper and lower church. This church is highly interesting for having been erected by foreign architects in the first half of the thirteenth century, in the "Tedesco," as the Italians called the German or Gothic style, then foreign to Italy; but more particularly for its connection with the Order of St. Francis, the first of the great artist-orders. The Benedictines being chiefly engaged in literary pursuits, it remained for the Franciscans and Dominicans to inspire a new feeling for Art in Italy. Some of the ornaments introduced in these paintings by Cimabue approach almost for the first time to the antique.

Duccio di Buoninsegna was somewhat younger than Cimabue, and advanced far more from the Byzantine traditions. He executed a large altar-piece for the Duomo (cathedral) of Siena, which is said to have been carried in triumphal procession like the picture by Cimabue. It was originally painted on both sides, but is now cut in two, and is a truly remarkable work for the period; Dr. Kugler's eulogies, however, almost border on extravagance.

With the opening of the fourteenth century an original style is at length developed. The final enfranchisement of the artist from the trammels of Byzantine superstition, and the commencement of the first great epoch of modern painting together with the establishment of the Florentine school, are to be ascribed to Giotto, who surpassed his master, Cimabue, far more than Cimabue had surpassed his predecessors. It is true that the outlines of Giotto are hard, his light and shade flat and ineffective, and perspective little regarded; yet his expression is greatly superior, and, for the first time since the decline of ancient art, we observe a successful attempt at composition, or

zantine artists we have *intentions* not their own, blindly transmitted."

—Sir C. EASTLAKE: note to KUGLER'S *Handbook*, vol. i. p. 18. In the last case the difference of the sense is perhaps more apparent than real—the "suggestiveness" is only an accident; *intention* has also something restricted and not essential in its signification; hence, in fact, the advantage in using the word *motives* in the new sense.

* This incident was very effectively treated in a picture by Mr. Leighton exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1855.

† It is scarcely necessary to relate the old legend that Giotto was originally a shepherd boy, and one day he was discovered drawing a sheep upon a slab of stone by Cimabue, who, astonished at the boy's talent, asked him to go and live with him, and become his pupil; an invitation which, with his parents' consent, he accepted with delight, and followed the great painter to Florence.

the regular disposal of the subject in the space allotted. His originality is further apparent in the introduction of portraiture, and the infusion of a didactic or allegorical spirit into his works. The latter is due, perhaps, to the influence of his friend Dante's great poem. We read of the general acquirements and character of Giotto in the works of Dante, Petrarci, Boccaccio, Sacchetti, etc. Many stories are told of his humor, which he showed as a boy: that, for example, of the pupil painting a fly on the face of a picture in the master's absence, and the subsequent attempt of the master to brush it off, is first told of Giotto and Cimabue. There is a saying, Rounder than the O of Giotto, which originated thus:—Boniface VIII. wishing to decorate St. Peter's, sent an envoy to Florence and Siena for artists, of whom he required specimens. Giotto's specimen was a circle drawn without the aid of compasses, with a brush charged with red color. This appeared more wonderful to the pope than anything else sent to him, and in the event Giotto fully justified the preference in the eyes of the Roman Court. A peculiarity in the figures of Giotto is the long almond-shaped eyes set close together. The tempera vehicle he employed was more fluid than that hitherto used; it allowed greater freedom of hand, and has also darkened but little with time. Many of the works of Giotto have disappeared; but a most interesting discovery, or rather recovery (for it was known to exist), of a youthful portrait of Dante, was made in 1840, on removing the whitewash from the wall of a chapel at Florence. Giotto was sculptor and architect as well as painter: the elegant detached Campanile (or bell-tower) of Florence is his work. So many, besides Giotto, of the greatest masters have distinguished themselves in more than one branch of the fine arts, that the suspicion naturally suggests itself whether the modern custom among artists of confining the attention to one *specialité* is not a mistake. If technical superiority is in this way arrived at, are not the grander and broader principles of Art left unattained?

The most exact idea of the style of Giotto to be gained in this country, may be obtained from the series of tracings in the court of the Crystal Palace belonging to the Arundel Society, taken from the paintings in the Chapel of the Arena at Padua, representing the life of our Saviour, and the life of the Virgin. The figures in the life of the Virgin, especially those in a "sposalizio" (or espousals), possess considerable grace. In the church at Assisi, Giotto painted a series of subjects from the life of (the patron saint) St. Francis. "One of those mediæval melodramas (if the term may be used), in the form of biography, which furnish the most interesting and beautiful subjects a painter can desire. The curtain rises on the youth of St. Francis, and, as the plot thickens, his strange hallucination—his quarrel with his father in the market-place on account of his passion for poverty—his giving his cloak to a poor person on the way-side—his institution of the order—his appearance before the Pope—his ecstasy—his stigmatization, follow in succession, until the catastrophe is reached in the death of the saint."*

These and similar biographical and historical series, executed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, had special uses among a people who, even to the present day, have comparatively little benefited by the invention of printing. It has been justly remarked that painting in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was at once a means of noble decoration and a manner of conveying information, thoughts, and ideas, not then, as now, to be got at through literature. Pictures were the books of the

* "The Mediæval Court," by Messrs. Digby Wyatt and Waring.

unlearned, and the unlearned were five-sixths of the people. The decorative purpose of pictures was effected mainly through color. Hence it is that, apart from color, we cannot estimate those early works aright as decoration; and apart from their sequence and connection in town-hall or chapel, we cannot read them book-fashion, or in any way comprehend the reality of their significance.

Giotto painted in various cities from Naples to Milan, and his works doubtless had an indirect influence in all parts of Italy. The scholars and imitators of Giotto are so numerous, that we can only mention a few of the principal. Among these, Taddeo Gaddi, the son of Gaddo Gaddi, the mosaicist, was one of the most important. The son of Taddeo, Angiolo Gaddi, was a good colorist, and the master of Cennino Cennini, who was apprenticed to him in 1375. In the "Trattato della Pittura" of Cennini we accordingly find a description of the practice of the fourteenth century, although it would partly appear that the original MS. was not finished till 1437. Tommaso di Stefano was called Giotto* from his successful imitation of Giotto. The humorous Buffalmacco was a contemporary of Giotto.

For a century after the time of Giotto, his followers, however, did not considerably progress beyond the point he reached; and his influence is very perceptible in the paintings executed during that period in the Campo Santo at Pisa. This celebrated cemetery takes its name from having, it is said, been filled with earth brought from the Holy Land. The walls of the arcaded building, which surround this sacred earth, are covered with paintings, quite invaluable as illustrations of the Art of the fourteenth century, though now, unfortunately, greatly decayed. Among these, two of the most remarkable are by Orcagna, viz., the "Triumph of Death," and the "Last Judgment." The attitudes of Christ and the Virgin in the latter were afterward borrowed by Michael Angelo in his famous "Last Judgment." Later painters have also taken Orcagna's arrangement of the patriarchs and apostles as their model, particularly Fra Bartolomeo and Raphael. Orcagna was a greater architect and sculptor than painter. He designed the elaborate and beautiful Tabernacle of the Virgin in Or San Michele at Florence.

Contemporary with Giotto, a celebrated painter, Simone di Martino (improperly called Simone Memmi), flourished at Siena. He is the subject of two of Petrarci's sonnets, and is said to have painted the portrait of Laura; but nothing is known of this picture. A small specimen of this master is preserved in the interesting collection of early works belonging to the Liverpool Institution. Painting made nearly equal advancement in other parts of Italy as in Tuscany; but the only names we need recall, are those of Pietro Cavallini† and Gentile da Fabriano, of the early Roman, or, as it was termed at this period, Umbrian school.

One Florentine painter, however, remains to be noticed; for although contemporary with the great innovations made by Massaccio early in the fifteenth century, he yet, in essential

* The Italian diminutive *ino* is often employed in this way for scholars, even should they greatly surpass their masters.

† It was conjectured by Vertue and Walpole that Cavallini was the architect of the crosses erected to Queen Eleanor and of the shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. The Petrus Romanus Civis mentioned in the inscription on the tomb may possibly have been Cavallini; but the date (1279 or 1280) would make him only twenty years old, according to Vasari. Vasari, however, is so frequently incorrect in dates, that no reliance can be placed upon his statements.

points, adhered to, or rather consummated, the types of the fourteenth century. We allude to the Beato Fra * Giovanni da Fiesole, or, as he has been generally called, Fra Angelico (the Angelico), from the great piety to which his life and works equally bear testimony. Fra Angelico never painted for money. He never began his work without prayer; and so entirely did his subject fill his soul, that he was frequently interrupted by tears when representing the sufferings of the Redeemer. It is not surprising that he considered what he painted with such intense feeling as a kind of inspiration, and, therefore, never ventured to retouch or attempt to improve what he had once finished. Profound serenity of feeling, confiding devotedness, a pure and holy frame of mind, form the never-failing characteristics of the paintings of Fra Angelico. "He knew nothing of human anxieties, of struggles with passion, of victory over it; it is a glorified and more blessed world which he endeavors to reveal to our view. He seeks to invest the forms he places before us with the utmost beauty his hand could lend them; the sweetest expression beams in all their countenances; a harmonious grace guides all their movements, particularly where the action is expressed by the treatment of the drapery. The most cheerful colors, like spring-flowers, are selected for the draperies, and a profusion of golden ornaments is lavished over the whole: every auxiliary has been employed that could give a new glory to these holy subjects. With a peculiar religious awe, he adheres scrupulously to traditional types, and ventures on none of the innovations which were already introduced into Art at Florence: these would have been a disturbing element to the child-like serenity of his mind. Of all artists, Fiesole is the most perfect example of this style; but in him likewise it appears most decidedly in all its restrictedness. He is inimitable in his representation of angels and glorified saints; weak, timid, and embarrassed when he introduces man in his human nature. Not merely the rancor and hatred of the foes of Christ, but all determined action is feebly expressed; his figures, even when in momentary repose, are deficient in apparent power to act, though the act to be performed may be the highest and the holiest. Thus, his representations of Christ, in whose form human power and divine sanctity should be equally prominent, are everywhere unsatisfactory, frequently unworthy. These faults are the result of a defective knowledge of the organization of the human body, the lower limbs of which are generally destitute both of that truth of action and position which Giotto especially had attained."†

Fra Angelico's first efforts were in miniature illuminations, and the peculiarities of this style are apparent in his numerous small panel pictures, and also in those of his pupil Benozzo Gozzoli. But the large compositions with which he adorned the cloisters of his order, in the monastery of St. Mark at Florence, show greater freedom of execution, especially his *chef-d'œuvre*, the "Crucifixion."

"The taste for studying the history of early Italian art is not a recent development in our own country alone; it is a novelty even in Italy itself. A century ago the Italians seemed to regard Perugino, the master of Raphael, as the *Ultima Thule* to which point investigation might be carried; and even Ghirlandajo, the teacher of Michael Angelo, with his fine frescoes in

the Sassetti Chapel of the Trinità at Florence, and compartments of the Sistine Chapel at Rome, was overlooked. Two energetic men, Outley in England, and Lasinio in Italy, labored hard to make the interest of this field of investigation more generally felt. Lasinio, the appointed *conservatore* of the Campo Santo at Pisa, exerted his utmost to save it from destruction during the revolutionary period, and removed coats of whitewash and mural tablets that even then, in classic Italy, obliterated the pictures and disfigured the walls. At the same time he published a magnificent series of large engravings from the paintings which decorate the ambulatories, as far as time had then spared them. The *conservatore* had in his youth spent years upon the study of these old neglected paintings; he recognized in them illustrations of former history, the past glories of his country, to which he was so attached, and which, at that time, lay so abased. He quoted the merry stories of Boccaccio about Buffalmacco, as he traced the few lines yet remaining from his pencil; and saw in Giotto's frescoes relating to the history of Job, scenes of Italian life, with all the richness and festive luxury which distinguished the nobles in the days of Dante; and beheld also, in many of the priestly functions, the ecclesiastic paraphernalia of Pope Boniface himself. Lasinio, by his energy and industry, made these works known, and, in the capacity of cicerone to the English visitors, who always flocked to the Campo Santo, he contributed in no slight degree to the prevalence of the taste now [becoming] so general among us. Outley, the Englishman, at the same time enjoying a certain independence of means, imbibed from his intercourse with Lasinio a similar taste, and made careful drawings of the more important frescoes, both at Pisa, Florence and Assisi. These he published in a series of bold engravings, but, from unavoidable costliness, they have never had any extensive circulation. D'Agincourt, in Paris, also did much to diffuse a wider knowledge of the history of Italian Art by collecting drawings of all available 'monuments,' including the sketches of Outley and Lasinio, and arranging them in chronological order. Lanzi, too, a writer of high order, contributed much to spread a taste for the study of the history of Art by his delightful volumes upon the various schools in Italy; a work which has been made equally popular in England by the well-known translation of William Roscoe. It is not a little remarkable that seven years ago we had no translation of Vasari's "Lives of the Painters" in the English language. Mrs. Foster's version, therefore, published in Bohn's Series, in 1850, was of noteworthy importance; and the more remarkable, as Vasari had for many years been translated into almost every other European language."—*Mr. Schaff, Jun., on the Paintings by Ancient Masters in the Art Treasures Exhibition.*

The end of the fourteenth century is remarkable for the introduction of *genuine* fresco painting, and, as the most important works of immediately succeeding artists consist of wall-paintings, we may examine them to greater advantage after some inquiry into the nature of "fresco buono," as it is termed. At the same time it must be remembered that many mural paintings were still executed in distemper, and panel pictures, of course, in the ordinary *tempera* (or, as it is termed by the Italians, *a guazzo*), until the introduction of oil-painting. To adhere, however, to chronological order, as nearly as our plan will permit, we must offer some account of mediæval mosaics, miniatures and glass painting before confining our attention to fresco painting. But, before concluding the present subject, we may mention that *tempera* was employed as complementary to

* Or *beatified brother*; the beatification of a holy person was an honor solemnly conferred by the Romish church, and only inferior to canonization.

† Kugler's "Handbook," etc., vol. i. p. 165.

fresco; and that up to the present day, as will be seen in the next section, oil-pictures are frequently executed partly in tempera, or, as it is now called, distemper—in other words, water-colors.

8. *TEMPERA AND ENCAUSTIC IN MODERN TIMES.*—Various attempts have been made to reintroduce wax painting; but the art of *penicillum-encaustic*, as practised by the ancients, seems to be lost. Wax painting, in the first centuries of the Christian era, appears to have superseded all other processes, except mosaic. In a manuscript of the eighth century wax painting, however, meets with little attention; and the art was almost forgotten during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, the original process being quite lost, judging from the slight description in the extremely rare notices of wax painting known to exist. A document in the records of the Duomo of Orvieto mentions a wax vehicle or varnish as having been used by Andrea Pisano in 1345, but only for coloring marble statues of the Virgin. Mrs. Merrifield, however, mentions a picture, reputed to be painted in wax, of the "Martyrdom of St. Simon the Younger," by Andrea Mantegna, in the possession of Signor Vallardi, at Milan. "The vehicle," says Mrs. Merrifield, "whatever it was, appeared to me to have been as manageable as that of Van Eyck."

The same collection, we are told, contains a modern picture also, which may with propriety be said to be in encaustic, since the colors are melted in by the application of a hot iron. In the attempted revival of wax painting in France and Germany (more especially at Munich), the principle of dissolving the wax in an essential oil has been adopted, the vehicle being consolidated by the addition of resins. The efforts of Montabert were most prominent in introducing this method; but Taubenheim and others recommend the solution of wax in a drying oil. A method of wax painting, invented by Count Caylus, about the middle of the last century, was highly extolled at the time, though beset by grave inconveniences. At Parma as well as Munich, a method of wax painting is now practised, and, in repainting the pictures by Sir James Thornhill, Mr. Paris, the artist, is represented to have used a wax vehicle, his own "marble medium."

We have said that oil pictures have been and are frequently executed partly in distemper. This partial use of water-colors, which is generally confined to the preparatory stages of the picture, recommends itself by enabling the artist to advance with greater facility through those stages, and also by the increased purity it secures in the superimposed color. Nearly all the Venetian painters are believed to have used this mixed method. It is known that the invariably clear blues in the pictures of Paul Veronese were painted in distemper and afterward varnished. Upon this subject we venture to quote, as the opinion of a practical authority, the following valuable passage from Burnet's "Essays on the Fine Arts."

"Until the time of Correggio and Titian, the peculiar beauties of oil painting were unknown. The power of representing the variety of textures and surfaces in nature, the art of giving to the light the means of reflecting back that luminous body unimpaired, and the conduct in the shadows so as to swallow up and absorb all reflection and refraction of light, were soon discovered to be its advantages over fresco; and Correggio and Giorgione availed themselves of such discovery: hence the impasto, and absence of oleaginous substances in the light portions of their pictures, and the unctuous and transparent properties in the shadows.

"The effect of such treatment can only now, in a manner, be guessed at; for though the lights remain in a degree unaltered, the rich glazings of the shadows have become dried up and blistered by the effects of time and heat. We can easily imagine that the water color, in the first instance, when the change took place, was not sufficiently charged with size or some resisting fluid; so that, on the application of oil glazings, the work darkened in a very great degree; and though colors laid on in distemper and glazed with oil pigments, will produce a much richer effect than either process separately, we trace a gradual approximation to the effect of water, or the luminous character of fresco painting, through the works of Titian, Tintoretto, and Paul Veronese.

"The truth and force of nature produced by a union of the peculiar properties of the two modes, have been felt and acknowledged by all painters up to the present time; and though Rubens, who laid the foundation of the art in Germany, finished his works principally in oil, yet, from adopting a white water-color ground, he preserved in a high degree the fresh and brilliant effects of the Venetian mode of painting; and by Velasquez it was carried into Spain, and by Vandyke into England, but gradually sunk into a leaden and dull arrangement of color, until revived by the indefatigable exertions of Sir Joshua Reynolds. So anxious was this celebrated artist to combine the luminous qualities of the Venetian style with the rich transparency of Correggio and Rembrandt, that half his life was spent in trying experiments on the various modes of producing this union, and which has occasioned the decay and destruction of many of his works; for though water-color will support oil painting; yet, when washed over it, so as to recover the freshness of the original ground, it contracts and tears the work to pieces: hence the deep and multifarious cracks and fissures in the background of most of his best colored pictures."

Turner also carried this principle too far, combining and varying the two methods in the most reckless manner.

"In Etty," Mr. Burnet continues, "We have the true Venetian crackly substance of water-color with the rich and transparent glazings of oil, and Wilkie had part of the quality for which we are contending in a very high degree. His pictures possess that peculiar stearine substance found in the works of Watteau, and which cost Reynolds a long life to acquire; but the other requisite is absent, the fresh water-color look we find in Watteau."

Since the introduction of oil painting, pictures have occasionally been executed with the old tempera egg vehicle. In the Colonna Palace, at Rome, there are several fine landscapes by Gaspar Poussin, said to be *à uovo*; and in the different collections throughout Europe tempera pictures may be found which have been painted as designs for fresco.

PERCEPTION OF BEAUTY.—Perception of beauty is one of the most decided characteristics by which man is distinguished from the brute. We discover no symptoms of admiration in animals of a lower grade than ourselves. The peacock excites no deference from the splendor of his plumage, nor the swan from her snow-white feathers; and the verdant fields in their summer bloom attract no more than as their flowery sweets allure the insect tribe, who in their turn are followed by their foes. To man alone belongs the prerogative of appreciating beauty, because admiration is graciously designed as the means of leading him on to moral excellence.—*S. Stickney.*